

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5 and 7-11 are presently active in this case. Claims 1, 3, 4, and 7-10 have been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 7, and 10 were objected to; Claims 1, 5, and 6 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 4,442,725 to Urabe in view of “applicants admitted prior art”; Claim 11 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Urabe in view of U.S. Patent Number 4,653,408 to Nagashima et al.; Claims 1 and 5 were rejected 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 2,368,408 to Brooking; and Claim 11 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brooking in view of Nagashima et al. Claims 2-4 and 7-10 were objected to as being dependant upon a rejected based claim, but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter.

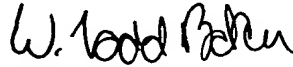
In view of the indication of allowable subject matter, applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the allowable features defined by Claim 2 and Claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Application No. 09/880,112  
Reply to Office Action of Mar 1, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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